MR. BARRY'S REMUNERATION FOR NEW HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT.

To assist our readers in forming a judgment in the dispute between Mr. Barry and the Government as to the amount of remuneration for his past services as architect of the new Palace of Westminster, we place before them the principal heads of a letter addressed by the architect, in February last, to the commissioners. He says,—"You are doubtless aware that the proposition originally made to me by the Government, in 1839, was, that I should receive the sum of 25,000*l.* for the labour and responsibility to be imposed upon me in the superintendence, direction, and completion of the intended edifice, and that I was induced to accede conditionally to that proposition in the belief that it was made to me in the absence of a due appreciation of the enormous extent of that labour and responsibility, and that any attempt on my part, at that time, to prove the inadequacy of the sum proposed would have been fruitless. I was further induced to take this course from having then entered upon the duties of my appointment as architect of the new palace for more than nineteen months, when I had already made extensive and costly arrangements to enable me to carry on the works; so that if, instead of acceding conditionally to the proposition, I had adopted the alternative of relinquishing the employment,—which, at the time, occurred to me,—I could not have done so without a considerable sacrifice. I preferred, therefore, to postpone all further application on the subject until I should be in a condition to prove incontestably the full extent of my services, and then to rely upon the Government for a just and liberal determination of the question."

The architect was appointed unconditionally to carry his design into effect at the commencement of 1837, and expected his "remuneration would be of the customary amount." On the 1st of March, 1839, he had the first official intimation as to the latter from the Commissioners of Woods, that they had given their best consideration to "all the circumstances of the case, the extent and importance of the buildings, the nature and description of the several works, the very large expenditure contemplated in the estimate, and the period within which it was proposed that such expenditure should be incurred," and thought the sum of 25,000*l.* would be a fair and reasonable remuneration. For the reasons before given he was induced "to accede conditionally to the proposition founded upon it—under a protest, however, as to the inadequacy of the amount proposed, and with an intimation that he should offer proof of its inadequacy when the building was in such an advanced state as to allow of a competent judgment being formed on the subject."

He then proceeds to comment on the opinion expressed by the Commissioners of Woods. First, that from the want of professional knowledge, they were incompetent to form any just opinion on the subject;—that "the extent and importance of the work" is a reason rather for increasing than diminishing the customary remuneration of the architect. As to "the nature and description of the work," the new palace "is now sufficiently advanced to allow of an accurate judgment being formed as to the amount of labour, skill, and responsibility that has been incurred in producing it. I invite a comparison between it and any other public building of modern times; and I think it will be evident, even to the uninitiated, that in point of variety of design, elaboration of details, and difficulties of combination and construction, the labour and responsibility incurred is much greater than in any other modern edifice that can be mentioned."

The delay and perplexities attendant on official communications have been very great. "As one proof among many others that might be adduced of the enormous amount of labour that has already devolved upon me in conducting this great national work to its present state, it will not be irrelevant to mention, that no less than between 8,000 and 9,000 original drawings and models have been prepared for it; a large portion of which emanated from my own hand, and the whole of the remainder have been made under my own immediate direction and supervision."

The amount spent in the work he thought a fair criterion of the amount of skill and labour required in producing it. Various circumstances, too, had occurred to extend the time originally fixed for completion.

He then shows that he has had much more to do than is usual or could have been anticipated, through Dr. Reid,—the changes made in the mode of conducting the business of Parliament,—and the vagueness of the original instructions given. And he considers, therefore, that he is justly entitled to at least the customary remuneration in respect of the outlay contemplated in the original design and estimate; and adds, that the whole of the arguments urged in favour of such remuneration apply with equal force to the expenditure upon extra works sanctioned by the Government or Parliament; "but to these it is scarcely necessary to observe, that the proposal for a limited amount of remuneration can have no reference." He looks, also, for a further remuneration for attendances on the Fine Arts Commission, and for drawings prepared for them, drawing up returns for House of Commons, &c. &c. In the course of ten years he has received of the 25,000*l.* originally proposed, 24,735*l.* 3s. 2d., or, after deducting his expenses, an income of 1,500*l.* per annum; which he considers does not by any means recompense him for the labours, responsibilities, and sacrifices incurred.

"The following is an account of the expenditure upon the building, exclusive of the river embankment wall, up to 31st December, 1848:—

Amount already advanced on account of works comprised in the original estimate of 707,104*l.*	£472,000	0	0
On account of extra works in the embankment of the river and in the foundations of the building, the new basement story, additional residences and offices, central tower, stone carving, and all structural arrangements connected with warming, ventilating, &c., &c., which could not have been foreseen, and which, consequently, form no part of the original design and estimate, amounting to	210,842	16	2
On account of extra finishings, works of decoration, library and other fittings, and for fixtures, furniture, upholstery, &c., expressly excluded from the original estimate, amounting to	139,415	3	0
On account of miscellaneous items, taking down and shoring up old buildings, new roofs and additions to Speaker's late residence and other old buildings, temporary roof and coverings, clerks of works' offices, casts of specimens for wood-carvers, &c., &c., amounting to	19,372	18	9
Total	£841,630	17	11

On the above amount of expenditure, therefore, I claim, for the reasons which I have adduced, the accustomed remuneration of 5 per cent.:—

Or	£42,081	10	0
Upon which I have received on account	24,735	4	2
Leaving a balance of	£17,346	6	10
And for special or extraneous services during a period of ten years, as above enumerated	5,256	0	0
Amount now claimed	£22,602	6	10

Mr. Barry concludes by saying that though he could prove himself entitled to more than the customary remuneration, he proposes to adhere to the long-established and generally-received standard of charge adopted by the profession generally, "in the hope that by so doing all controversy or contention on the subject may be avoided; and when," he continues, "the amount of the claim which, in consequence, I am now willing to receive as a recompense in full for my past services, is fairly considered with reference to the labour, responsibility, and sacrifices incurred in conducting, under very peculiar and trying circumstances, the largest and most elaborate architectural work ever, perhaps, undertaken at one time in this or any other country, to which I have devoted almost exclusively the best period of my professional life; and when, also, it is contrasted with the incomes of other professions, such as those of the law, medicine, civil engineering, &c., which, it is well known, vary from 12,000*l.* to 20,000*l.* per annum, and even upwards; and when, also, the important fact to which I have before alluded is borne in mind, that every architect appointed to the superintendence of public works in this country, both before and since the date of my engagement, has been paid the full amount of the customary commission, I cannot doubt but that it will be generally admitted, not only that I am fully justified in the demand which I now make, but that I have not unduly estimated the value of my services as the architect of such an important national work as the new Palace at Westminster."

PROPOSED CHURCH, SANDFORD DISTRICT, CHELTENHAM.

MR BRANDON'S remarks on the instructions for architects in this matter (see last number of THE BUILDER) are to the point, and though severe, they are not more so than are called for by the gross attempt to induce professional men to bestow their time and talents in such a paltry affair at the vague chance of receiving, *ad Græcas kalendas*, a fraction of their due for their designs, working drawings, specifications, estimates, time and attention given to inspections, as well as for reimbursement of their travelling expenses.

Perhaps the committee include in *the architect's 5 per cent. commission the salary of the clerk of the works*, under their comprehensive phrase "of every other possible expense incident, &c. &c.;" indeed they might as well do so, to be consistent in their attempted proceeding of applying the mechanical power called the screw to the hard-earned pecuniary recompense of the first-named adviser.

A vein of amusing blundering pervades these instructions, and excites our compassion as well as our regret at the obvious tendency of the whole transaction. Thus, we are informed that the "*stone*" is *not* to be of the style usually called Roman, &c. &c." What is intended is of course obvious, but even with this excuse, the description of the style intended for the church is but a *negative* one: "it is not to be Roman, Grecian, or classical;" but there are more styles than one not mentioned, *ex. gr.*, Egyptian, Persian, Byzantine: will they suit the taste of the committee?

Among "the plans to be sent, are plans of the ground floor, and (if any) of galleries." "If any!" Can the Committee for one moment suppose that 1,000 persons could be accommodated on the ground floor area alone, without galleries, in a building of the cheap description which their 4,000*l.* could in any way produce? They give exact dimensions for the pews and free seats, and they could soon calculate the number of superficial feet that a building *must contain* to accommodate 1,000 persons in the area, besides the vacant space necessary for passages and chancel, vestry room, &c. let them do this, and then see the length and breadth their church, for 4,000*l.*, "all expenses included," would necessarily take up.

The scale to which the drawings are to be made is larger than usual—almost large enough to dispense with many detail drawings by the hand of the original designer, as the parts would appear distinct enough for successful transcribing and enlarging, if required, by another skilful hand.*

The services of an honorary solicitor, as well as the signature of an honorary secretary, are but too plainly discernible in the fast-bind, hard-bargain-driving clauses of this instructive intimation to architects, of whom so many as may rush in to compete for the prize generously offered to them will richly deserve the sweet fruits which the close of the competition will, *nostro judicio*, bring to maturity in the approaching autumn. Φ

* "The church to be built of stone (not being of the style usually called, &c. &c.)" *sic in orig.*

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